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AD514579	
CLASSIFICATION CHANGES	
TO:	unclassified
FROM:	confidential
LIMITATION CHANGES	
TO:	Approved for public release, distribution unlimited
FROM:	Controlling DoD Organization. Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development [Army], Washington, DC 20310.
AUTHORITY	
AGO D/A ltr, 2 Apr 1976; AGO D/A ltr, 2 Apr 1976	

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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AGDA-A (M)

(22 Mar 71) FOR OT UT 71B018

26 March 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: BG E. R. Ochs, CG, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Period 10 August 1970 through 15 January 1971 (U)

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1. Reference: AR 1-26, dated 4 November 1966, Subject: Senior Officer Debriefing Report (U).

2. Transmitted herewith is the report of BG E. R. Ochs, subject as above.

3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.

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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

**KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General**

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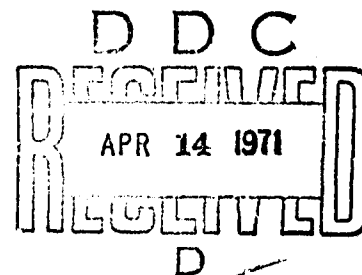
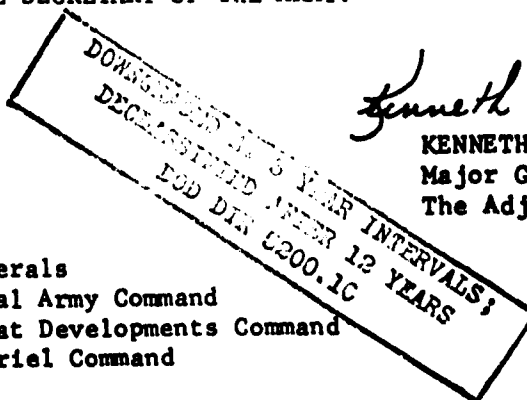
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375**

AVHDO-DO

9 MAR 1971


SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report - Brigadier General E. R. Ochs

**Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D.C. 20310**

1. Inclosed are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by Brigadier General E. R. Ochs. The report covers the period 10 August 1970 through 15 January 1971, during which time BG Ochs served as Commanding General, 173rd Airborne Brigade.
2. BG Ochs is recommended as a guest speaker at appropriate service schools and colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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as (trip)
2 cy wd HQ DA


Clark W. Stevens Jr.
Captain AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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SENIOR OFFICER DEBRIEFING PROGRAM

(BG E.R. OCHS, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE)

COUNTRY: REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

DEBRIEFING REPORT BY BRIGADIER GENERAL E.R. OCHS

DUTY ASSIGNED: COMMANDING GENERAL, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE

INCLUSIVE DATES: 10 AUG 1970 - 15 JANUARY 1971

DATE OF REPORT: 15 JANUARY 1971

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1. **INTRODUCTION.** a. I assumed command of the 173d Airborne Brigade on 10 August 1970. I had served the previous 8 months as the Deputy Brigade Commander and some of my observations will reflect back into that period. At this time the brigade was involved in Operation WASHINGTON GREEN. This operation began on 15 April 1969 in support of the accelerated GVN pacification program in the four northern districts of Binh Dinh Province (AO LEE) in the Republic of Vietnam. The operation was conceived as a long-term effort by brigade forces, participating with the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), Free World Military Forces (FWMF), and Government of Vietnam (GVN) authorities.

b. Simply stated, the pacification efforts of the brigade were directed toward providing a secure environment in the populated areas of AO LEE on a 24-hour basis. It was essential that the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI) within the hamlets be rooted out and destroyed. This was accomplished through cordon and search operations coordinated with district officials, district forces, and Revolutionary Development (RD) cadre. The primary objective was to keep the enemy out of the hamlets. If this goal could be achieved, then the RD cadre could attain their purposes by working in a secure area. The pacification program was also intended to improve the military efficiency of ARVN as well as Regional Forces (RF) and Popular Forces (PF). This improvement was accomplished by three methods: combined operations, supervised training, and limited materiel support.

c. Operating under a "pairing concept," 173d Airborne units collocated with a counterpart RF/PF element. This method not only provided around-the-clock training and experience for the GVN forces, but also helped the GVN territorial forces and district governments to gain the confidence necessary to "stand alone" in the destruction of the VCI and the defense of their people. The close and continued association of US/GVN forces with the RF/PF was the key in transferring allegiance permanently from the Viet Cong to the GVN.

d. Since its inception, Operation WASHINGTON GREEN has undergone six distinct phases, each characterized by a change in emphasis without losing sight of the overall goals of the operation. Phase IV of WASHINGTON GREEN was in effect when my command began. This phase emphasized an accelerated Regional and Popular Force training program, which I shall more fully develop in the training portion of this report.

e. Continued progress during Phase IV of WASHINGTON GREEN created conditions suggesting yet another shift in emphasis. This new target was the root source of the Communist military and political structure - the local VCI. Focus upon this new emphasis coincided with my assumption of command.

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2. **OPERATIONS.** a. On 1 September 1970, the 173d Airborne Brigade began Phase V of Operation WASHINGTON GREEN. Support of pacification and training of territorial forces continued. In addition, the targeting and destruction of the VCI were given first priority. The brigade's effort during this drive to eliminate the VCI was a supporting role to GVN police and military forces. Military pressure was maintained on the enemy throughout the period making it difficult for the VCI to move and carry out their objectives and at the same time making them more vulnerable to GVN forces. Active support was provided in the area of IFW teams and cordon forces working in combined operations with RF/PF forces. During October, great emphasis was placed on the conduct of coordinated operations with RF/PF units to deny the enemy rice during the rice harvest season.

b. The departure in late November of the 4th Infantry Division from Camp Radcliff near An Khe created a vacuum which threatened the security of QL-19, the vital highway link between the coastal port of Qui Nhon and the highlands capital of Pleiku. The brigade was tasked to fill this void. In turn, this dictated adjustments in the brigade's role in WASHINGTON GREEN. Thus, Phase VI was put into effect on 11 December. This phase required the move of the 2/503d Infantry to An Khe and continued the triple mission of pacification, RF/PF training, and destruction of the VCI in AO LEE, but on a reduced scale. Provisions were made for the turnover of all US-occupied bridge sites along Route QL-1 in Tam Quan District to GVN forces.

c. The movement of the 3/503d Infantry to An Khe in late December 1970 marked the end of Operation WASHINGTON GREEN. With the inauguration of Operation GREENE LIGHTNING on 1 January 1971, the 173d Airborne Brigade entered a period of combat, security, and interdiction operations in the mountainous western section of AO LEE and in the area around An Khe.

d. The apparent self-sufficiency and confidence of the territorial forces in AC LEE is a measure of the success of Operation WASHINGTON GREEN. The ultimate success of these forces cannot be guaranteed, but their present viability is sufficient to permit the drastic shift in the brigade's mission and deployment of units. Furthermore, it permits the ARVN greater freedom of action and mobility in its pursuit of enemy forces in the lowlands. ARVN's current posture permits it to collocate with the RF/PF and PSDF as we did in the latter stages of WASHINGTON GREEN. I consider the collocation of ARVN and RF/PF units to be a significant step forward in Vietnamization of the war. Austerity in the use of combat assets was the keynote throughout the period. This was in response to guidance from COMUSMACV. Foremost was the reduction in the use of USAF aircraft on targets where the effectiveness of resources expended could be measured. As a result of this cutback, detailed target reconnaissance was conducted prior to each preplanned air strike. A ground or aerial bomb damage assessment (BDA) followed each air strike. Similarly, artillery expenditures were drastically reduced.

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e. In late August the naval gunfire liaison team was withdrawn from the 173d Airborne Brigade. This was due to the infrequent availability of US Navy warships for ground support missions.

f. Operations were characterized by small unit operations. The enemy successfully avoided contact with company and larger operations. The most successful approach was to break down units into 3 - 8 man teams, infiltrate them into known enemy areas, and have them be in ambush along trails for 3 - 5 days. The enemy was forced to move in order to supply himself and carry out his missions. Under these conditions he was highly vulnerable to our ambushes. At the same time this minimized movement of our forces and the consequent trouble with booby traps. Regardless of the size of the enemy in relation to the size of the ambush force, in no case did he turn and attack the ambush force after being hit. In one instance an 8-man ambush was sprung on an enemy force of over 100 resulting in 24 KIA and 2 CIA. The remainder fled.

g. Rome Plow. Prior to my assumption of command, the brigade suffered numerous casualties from mines, booby traps, and snipers in eastern Tam Quan District. This area was ideal for such activity because of the dense vegetation and foliage. As a result, the brigade was unable to persuade the local forces to operate in the area. A land clearing company was requested to conduct operations in Tam Quan and other areas in Phu My and Hoai Nhon Districts. The 538th Engineer Company (LC) was placed in general support of the brigade from 7 September until 5 December.

h. The use of the Rome Plows in Tam Quan District was somewhat unique. Instead of totally stripping unnecessarily large areas, the brigade conducted a selective clearing program. After detailed advanced planning and close coordination with local officials, the specific clearing area of each Rome Plow was carefully controlled to insure that only booby trap areas, Viet Cong hiding places, and potential ambush sites were destroyed. All dwellings and land areas designated by local officials as friendly were avoided. To accomplish this, a hamlet or village official would accompany the engineer "tree boss" physically marking the area to be cleared.

i. During clearing operations in Tam Quan, over 750 bunkers and tunnels and dozens of booby traps were destroyed. Subsequent operations by local enemy forces were severely hampered due to the loss of their customary hiding places and routes of travel. Because of the careful coordination and method of operations, no claims or complaints of needless destruction were filed by the local populace. It is my belief that the brigade preserved the support of friendly civilians in Tam Quan while reducing the enemy's advantage there. A valuable secondary dividend was the clearing of a considerable amount of arable land suited for crops.

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j. In addition to these successes in Tam Quan and Hoai Nhon Districts, over 3400 acres in central Phu My District and the Song Son Pass area were selectively cleared at a cost to the enemy of 250 more bunkers destroyed.

k. Selective land clearing with the Rome Plows results in long term pacification benefits which do not accrue from totally denuding vast land areas. The close coordination with local officials in this type of operations results in their understanding, cooperation, and continued loyalty.

l. The long term benefits derived from selective Rome Flow clearing should be weighed carefully against the short term tactical advantages gained by the total destruction of immense areas of vegetation. It is recommended that all future land clearing operations be evaluated within these parameters.

m. Local security is an area of concern when conducting land clearing operations. Security for Rome Plows requires more than one technique or method, depending on the enemy situation and activities, and the terrain.

n. During the brigade's initial land clearing operations, it appeared that the major threat to tracked vehicles and Rome Plows would be B-40 rockets. Therefore, security was provided for armored personnel carriers (APC) and Rome Plows by a screen of dismounted infantry at a distance sufficient to prevent the vehicles from being engaged with B-40 rockets. The enemy was either thwarted by this tactic, or else he merely chose not to attack. However, after several days of land clearing, he began to heavily booby trap the area. These booby traps varied in size from a hand grenade to a 175mm artillery projectile. They represented a substantial threat to the dismounted infantry screen and caused a reevaluation of the employment of the security force. To counter the booby trap menace, a Rome Plow would cut a swath around the area to be cleared, followed by APC's carrying the infantry. The infantry would dismount at intervals to provide security around the work site. Neither the APC's nor the infantry moved out of the cleared area. Since Rome Plows are virtually immune to explosives as large as 155mm howitzer shells, booby traps were neutralized by the plows. This technique was effective, and no further casualties were suffered.

o. It is recommended that after a careful evaluation of the area to be cleared, a detailed examination of all available intelligence be made to determine the enemy's most probable course of action to halt or delay the land clearing operation. Once a technique is adopted, it is imperative that a constant reevaluation be made to preclude the possibility of adhering to a security technique which protects the Rome Plows only at the cost of unacceptable casualties among the security force.

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3. THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE. a. While great success had been achieved in reducing the effectiveness of VC/NVA main force units, local forces and even village and hamlet guerrillas, the VCI in northern Binh Dinh remained intact. Progress in pacification reached a plateau and further progress was hampered by the inherent capability of the VCI to maintain a level of resistance through terrorism and insurgency type operations.

b. In the past, the VCI supplied local guerrillas and main force units with food and munitions and exerted some degree of control over the population. Intelligence, however, indicated that future VCI efforts would be directed more toward gaining control of a wide population base, which would be required if the VC were to succeed in forcing a coalition government in South Vietnam. Therefore, in close coordination with MACV advisory teams, an effort was made to develop a VCI targeting program for AO LEE. The task of eliminating the VCI was primarily a GVN responsibility; however, GVN agencies in some areas appeared reluctant to aggressively pursue VCI elimination operations. OPERATION FERRET was initiated as a pilot program in mid-1970 by MACV-CORDS, aided by the 173d Airborne Brigade, with the specific aim of acquiring and compiling intelligence information for use in targeting VCI personalities. The program was intended to create an English language information base by which MACV could advise the Vietnamese while at the same time affording units of the brigade required target information. It was anticipated that eventually the National Police would take over the complete operation.

c. Targeting was mainly focused on the elimination of village and hamlet level VCI. Among the techniques used was the offering of rewards for information leading to the capture of individuals known to have committed crimes against the people that were verified by at least three sources. Rewards were advertised by means of posters which had to be approved by the Security Committee at Binh Dinh Province. IPW teams were placed at Tam Quan and Phu My District headquarters. The program was later expanded to include Hoai Nhon and Hoai An Districts, with additional support from the 55th MI Detachment. IPW teams received training from MACV-CORDS personnel concerning the program and VCI methods of operation. Subsequently, the teams interrogated all Hoi Chanhs and prisoners in their districts who rallied or were captured during the year. Information received was then compiled into dossiers for each VCI personality identified. The teams were satellited with the district intelligence operations coordination center (DIOCC) and close coordination was effected with district personnel. Hoi Chanhs and prisoners were interrogated as they were received at the DIOCC's and updating of targeting data became a continuous process.

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d. Since the program began, over 150 individuals have been interrogated, resulting in over 50 detailed reports on VCI personalities and organizations. The most critical problem was the inability to gain timely information on the location of important VCI. The time lapse between the time a person rallied or was captured and the time reaction was finally initiated was too great. To counter this problem, the brigade developed a list of specific questions designed to determine when the VC enter hamlets, what their actions are, and where their exit routes are located. Each rallier and PW is asked these questions during interrogation. It is anticipated that valuable information will be developed which will enable immediate reaction and neutralization.

e. Problems were also encountered in the classification of various positions which persons held in the infrastructure. The VCI cell structure breeds a multitude of leadership positions. Somewhere between the lowest and highest levels exists a vague and nebulous line that separates real power and influence from superficial control. The book Current Breakout of VCI Executive and Significant Cadre 1970, otherwise known as the "Green Book" contains listings of important positions; however, many positions are not included. For instance, "The Old Peoples' Association" is not listed in the "Green Book" yet it is an important organization in Tam Quan District. In AO LEE, where the VCI has been hard hit by years of fighting, many VCI fill two or more positions so that the role one man plays is multiplied. The GVN, whose job it is to monitor VCI neutralizations, tends to include miscellaneous cadre, laborers, and low level cell members as true VCI, when in fact they are not. This causes inflated and inaccurate reports.

f. Probably the greatest spin-off from the program has been the increased awareness on the part of ARVN and GVN agencies in AO LEE that the VCI must be eliminated. The identification of enemy killed in action improves daily through continuous coordination with local officials and by the use of photography. ARVN elements recently introduced to pacification are beginning to recognize the importance of an active VCI elimination program.

g. Although OPERATION FERRET is not complete at this time, some evaluation can be made of its results. Since it began in AO LEE on 10 August 1970, over 200 VCI cadre have been neutralized even though the vast majority of neutralizations was the result of normal combat operations.

h. The program has produced valuable data; however, application of the information to specific targeting requires further development. Ultimately, the future of OPERATION FERRET lies in the adoption of the program by the Vietnamese and in aggressive reaction to the information obtained.

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i. I recommend that OPERATION FERRET be continued and expanded by the Vietnamese. With the drawdown of American forces and Vietnamization, the program must now become wholly Vietnamese.

j. Targeting Information: Targeting information is the initial step to success in any tactical operation. We must have an accurate picture of what the enemy has done in the past, where he has done it, and what friendly activity has been initiated in the area. In addition, targeting of brigade assets such as the ranger company, air cavalry, and visual reconnaissance must be done in a selective, as opposed to arbitrary, manner.

k. Recognizing that a recording and retrieval system was the key to targeting, a system was developed whereby the AO was divided into 10 kilometer grid squares. Overlays depicting friendly and enemy activity were made for each grid square on a monthly basis. Supporting documents such as agent reports, INTSUM's, and spot reports were filed with the overlay and key sheet. When a commander or staff officer wanted a description of a specific area, analysis of the overlays, placed one atop the other, gave an instant visual picture. If backup information was desired, a typist could easily copy the key sheet, which listed each item, date, and grid. Once organized, the system was managed by a well qualified non-commissioned officer.

l. As a result of the expenditure of one man's efforts, battalion commanders could immediately obtain all source information about an area for use in planning operations.

m. In addition, Brigade assets could be deployed selectively where there was the greatest probability of success. Constant review of the overlays reflected enemy activity patterns. These patterns were quickly translated into "target sheets" which reflected not only the sum total of the incidents, but also contained a meaningful comment from our order of battle section. Tactical commanders were provided these unsolicited "target sheets" for planning of future operations.

n. In the early stages of employment of the numerous types of unattended ground sensor (Duffle Bag) assets available to my sensor specialists, our efforts were directed primarily toward detection of enemy routes of movement in order to provide a firm basis for decisions dealing with employment of maneuver elements. The presence and use of some of these routes were confirmed. However, it became apparent that due to the line of sight restrictions of most Duffle Bag equipment, attempting to achieve blanket coverage of AO LEE would be a futile exercise. The obvious hindrances were the numerous prominent and intermittent mountains masking many areas of the AO.

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o. Our planning was redirected toward a program whereby the most tactically important areas would be given maximum sensor coverage through the use of monitoring sites located on terrain features high enough to overcome line of sight restrictions. Thus emerged the concept of the "fire support surveillance base" (FSSE). The first step was to choose some of the now confirmed routes of enemy movement and, through a careful assessment, determine where movement was heaviest and at which points we could most heavily damage the enemy as he traveled. Where the most ideal locations were identified, a test sensor field was implanted. If readouts confirmed these locations as being the best around which to develop enlarged fields, more sensors of several types were implanted and a semi-permanent monitoring site constructed. In the case of the first of these sites, the area covered with sensors was a valley floor approximately 6 kilometers in length and up to 3 kilometers wide. An unpaved road ran up the middle of the valley. The monitoring site was constructed on the most prominent adjacent terrain feature, which allowed line of sight observation the length of the valley.

p. When the new site, named FSSB Floyd, was fully operational, it provided an integrated system of detecting the movement of the enemy across the valley floor. The integrated surveillance system consisted of sensors and monitors, an ANPPS-5 personnel detection radar, numerous night observation devices, daylight observation instruments, 4.2" mortars, 81mm mortars, a .50 caliber ground mounted machine gun, and a quad .50 machine gun turret. The FSSE concept became a proven asset in late August 1970, when, in the early morning, the 3d Battalion, 2d NVA Regiment, unaware of the presence of FSSB Floyd, began a march up the road in the center of the valley floor. As the element was detected by the sensors in the valley, the fire support means at Floyd began a devastating attack on the front, middle, and rear of the enemy column. The destruction wrought upon the 3d Battalion was proven by the dead and wounded left on the valley floor and was confirmed by wounded Ho Chi Minh and POW's taken as late as a month after the attack. The success of FSSE Floyd led to the construction of another FSSE in an area similar in terrain and enemy activity.

q. While the FSSE concept capitalized on the capability of attacking the enemy immediately upon detecting his presence, the brigade's unmanned sensor program also continued to employ Duffle Bag assets for intelligence gathering. The effective use of sensors in both roles made the Duffle Bag program in the 173d Airborne Brigade one of the most successful in USARV.

r. Company N (Ranger), 75th Infantry. Company N (Ranger), 75th Infantry, is the organic Ranger unit of the brigade and its mission is to provide surveillance and reconnaissance. Additionally, it is capable of

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conducting small unit ambushes, limited raids, POW snatches, and pathfinder operations for heliborne and parachute operations.

s. With the brigade's maneuver battalions committed to pacification of the coastal lowlands of AO LEE, there developed a need to screen the northern and western flanks of the AO. Employment of Ranger teams in these outlying areas proved to be highly successful in early detection of the enemy's movements into the populated coastal areas and was by far the most productive source of intelligence available.

t. Because of the importance of the mission assigned to Company N, it was determined that its authorized TOE strength of 2 officers and 59 enlisted men was insufficient. As a result, it was expanded to a strength of 3 officers and 125 enlisted men, increasing the company's flexibility and combat capabilities. This expansion was made at the expense of the maneuver battalions. The Rangers often provided the brigade with timely reports on enemy presence and activity and just as often made contacts with the enemy that, when further developed by battalion reaction forces, produced significant results.

u. In late November, in an attempt to locate NVA main force units in the AO, Ranger teams were sent into a valley in the southern portion of AO LEE. The Rangers almost immediately became engaged in heavy contact with the enemy and one company of the 3d Battalion, 503d Infantry, reacted. The most significant result of the action was that documents captured from a high level NVA political officer revealed the approximate location of the 2d NVA Regiment elements and provided the brigade's intelligence analysts with information as to the mission and future plans of that unit. The documents also revealed that during the enemy's Fall campaign (Sep - Oct 1970) the brigade inflicted 200 casualties on the regiment and forced it to withdraw from combat for political and military re-training.

v. The Rangers' economy of force role allowed the brigade to continue to support the GVN pacification program, while still providing the necessary detection of enemy movement in the periphery of AO LEE, and was largely responsible for the enemy's failure to get into the populated areas with any sizeable force. Instead, he was detected, engaged, and defeated in the mountainous borders of the AO where maximum friendly combat power could be brought to bear on him.

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4. **CHEMICAL ACTIVITIES.** a. The brigade effectively and extensively employed an aerially delivered flame munition in conjunction with tactical operations. The basic component of the munition was a 55 gallon drum filled with thickened or unthickened fuel. The drums were assembled into various size external helicopter loads which were rigged for movement in slings and cargo nets. These drums were normally arranged in sling configurations of eight drums per net. One sortie consisted of two nets of 18 drums with a payload of 880 gallons of fuel. The drums were externally slung beneath a CH-47 helicopter which delivered the load to the target area. On short final approach to the target, the CH-47 traveled at approximately 50 knots at an altitude of from 300 to 1000 feet depending upon the weather, the friendly unit's disposition in the vicinity of the target and the enemy situation.

b. Over the target, the load was released when the hook mechanism was activated. Because the nets were secured to the CH-47 helicopter, all air items were recovered through the cargo hole of the aircraft after the release by an internal Chemical crew. When the drums of fuel burst upon ground impact, their contents splattered over a rectangular area which averaged 35 meters by 75 meters. The fuel dispersed on the ground was then ignited by M-30 tracers fired from a C&C aircraft. The flame fuel delivering CH-47 always worked with a C&C ship which also verified the location of friendly units adjacent to the drop location and marked the target with colored smoke.

c. The drum drop flame munitions had the advantage of being prepared, coordinated, approved, and employed totally within US Army capabilities. This made the weapon available to the ground commander to attack any target after priorities had been established for employment of Army air assets. Operations were classified as pre-scheduled and contact missions. Prescheduled missions were programmed from 2 to 5 days in advance and contact missions were flown in immediate response to tactical requirements. On many occasions flame munitions were delivered on target in as little as 15 minutes following receipt of the contact request by the Brigade Chemical Section.

d. The flame munitions employed from the CH-47 helicopter proved extremely effective in varied operations against a wide range of targets. Targets included known and suspected enemy troop locations, tunnel/boulder complexes, bunkers, caves, cache sites, and heavily vegetated and booby-trapped areas. Areas where secondary fires would result were considered prime targets. The thick underbrush and dense vegetation, once burned off, revealed cave and tunnel entrances, bunkers and trenches and campsites and way stations.

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e. Boobytrapped areas were also selected because the flame munitions demonstrated the capability to explode, burn, or expose the devices. Sorties flown against a series of heavily infested boobytrapped hedge rows in southern Tam Quan District resulted in 12 separate and well-defined detonations in the target area. Numerous other missions against this type of target proved just as effective.

f. Enemy troops were engaged with the intent of either destroying or driving them from their positions so that helicopter gunships or ground troops could engage them. This concept has consistently been employed throughout the brigade's AO in support of ground troops in contact or cordon forces surrounding enemy positions and base camp areas. Not only did the flame drum drop eliminate enemy personnel by burning, suffocation, and concussion, but the psychological effect of flame munitions created confusion, panic, and disorganization within their ranks. One large size enemy unit was bombarded with 13 sorties of thickened and unthickened fuel in the mountainous foothills of western Tam Quan District. During the drops and for the following 2 days, small groups attempted to exfiltrate through the cordon forces. In excess of 30 VC/NVA were successfully engaged and killed as they tried to flee. In another engagement, one Hoi Chanh surrendered. Upon interrogation he reported that the flame drop in his area of sanctuary was one of the major contributing factors that influenced him to Chieu Hoi and that the VC in the region considered the incendiary flame drop as one of the most feared weapons employed against them.

g. Missions were also executed in close support of ground forces in contact. Extensive drops were made 50 to 75 meters from friendly lines on enemy positions with devastating effect. Numerous enemy KIA's and WIA's resulted and in all cases, the VC/NVA forces broke contact.

h. Over a 10 month period 938 operational sorties were flown which resulted in 58 confirmed VC/NVA KIA's, 135 reported secondary explosions, scores of bunkers destroyed, and numerous caves and tunnels uncovered. Intelligence, Hoi Chanh, and POW reports have indicated numerous other enemy casualties attributable to the flame munitions, as well as definite adverse psychological effect upon VC/NVA personnel.

i. Based upon weather conditions and the availability of aircraft assets, the brigade programmed daily Airborne Personnel Detection (APD) operations. The APD or "Snoopy" device was a helicopter-mounted detector system designed to indicate the presence of man by detection of airborne effluents generated by human-associated acts.

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j. The Brigade S2 evaluated all planned operations and areas requiring intensified collection efforts and assigned APD missions based on unit requests and current intelligence requirements. The S2 also determined the number and size of the target area. The mission requirements were given to the Brigade Chemical Officer who tasked the Chemical Detachment for installation of the APD instrument and operators.

k. Four helicopters were required for the APD mission. One UH1H helicopter carried the personnel detector and the detector operator. Because of the terrain in Binh Dinh Province, the detector ship flew a contour pattern at tree top level at an air speed of 50 to 75 knots. A C&C helicopter flew above the detector ship at an altitude of 1000 to 1500 feet. The C&C ship always positioned itself so it could observe the detector ship in relation to the target area. This C&C helicopter served as a radio relay, a rescue aircraft, and the APD readout plotter. Two gunships continuously orbited above the detector ship and below the C&C aircraft and provided fire support cover. When a response was observed on the detector's continuous strip chart recorder located in the bottom detector ship, the operator radioed "hot spot" to the plotter in the top C&C ship who marked the readout directly on his map.

l. APD hotspots were engaged by artillery fire after the grids were cleared and by accompanying gunships when visual sightings were made and approval obtained. APD hotspots were also immediately passed to ground commanders by the Brigade S2 for action which they deemed appropriate. Visual reconnaissance flights were also conducted in the areas concerned in an effort to further expand the target.

m. On occasion, ground troops were employed to investigate APD readouts. However, this was often unproductive, and the APD system must be characterized overall as a disappointment. It was our least productive target acquisition means, particularly in terms of resources expended. The APD system was generally of value only in confirming other intelligence indicators.

n. CS munitions were effectively used in all types of tactical operations in support of the brigade. Brigade Chemical personnel employed the full complement of CS munitions and bulk CS agents.

o. The following are examples of our tactical application of riot control agent munitions:

(1) To attack targets containing enemy troops and civilians where minimum civilian jeopardy and no destruction of structures was desired. CS

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was employed against hamlets and villages temporarily occupied by VC/NVA forces. A typical operation was conducted in the vicinity of An Thuong Hamlet which had been infiltrated by a force of VC/NVA. Twenty E-158 CS Canister Clusters were delivered by UH1H helicopter and expended upwind from the Hamlet. As the CS cloud moved through the zone, a friendly unit swept the area. The enemy troops retreated from the hamlet without further resistance. The CS munitions had effectively saturated the built-up area and demoralized the enemy.

(2) To rout enemy troops from bunkers, caves, foxholes, tunnels, and suppress enemy fire. CS munitions were employed in conjunction with tactical air on suspected enemy base camps, hard positions, and strong points in a target softening role. Before the TAC air expended, CS munitions were aerially delivered on enemy fortified positions. Because of the extended sizes of the base camps engaged and the requirement for heavy, sustained concentrations, 60 to 70 E-158's were dropped by CH47 helicopter. Maneuver forces then combat assaulted into the target vicinity following the airstrikes. In the fire suppressing role, CS munitions were employed against VC/NVA rear echelon troops protecting enemy crop fields prior to spraying the enemy cultivation with the helicopter mounted Agavenco Herbicide Sprayer. During several of these missions small arms fire was directed against the spray ship, but because of the initial CS expenditure, the fire was erratic and sporadic.

(3) To restrict use of terrain facilities. Known and highly suspected enemy base camps, safe havens, and assembly areas were contaminated with persistent agent CS-2 to restrict their further use by enemy without the need for continued occupation by friendly forces. Recontamination was accomplished periodically to continue a prohibitive concentration which would prevent re-use by enemy forces.

(4) To restrict use of bunkers, caves, tunnels, and dug-in positions. Such complexes contaminated with persistent agent CS-2 restricted the enemy use for periods up to 5 months without recontamination. Contamination proved especially useful in certain types of boulder and cave complexes which could not be destroyed or closed by demolition. The numerous complexes found predominantly in this region of Binh Dinh Province that were used extensively by enemy personnel are not a series of man-made tunnels or caves, but a series of openings, spacings, and gaps formed by large boulders piled one upon another. Since destruction or demolition was not feasible, large quantities of bulk CS-2 were placed in the lowest levels and disseminated by means of detonating cord, thus contaminating the entire system.

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5. ARMY AVIATION. a. As a result of increased drawdown of aviation units and the stringent budgetary limitation for purchase of aviation spare parts, intense command interest in conserving helicopter blade time developed. Initial guidance indicated that an overall reduction in flying time of 15% was necessary in order to insure availability of aircraft for future requirements.

b. The initial steps taken to reduce our helicopter utilization were arbitrary cutbacks in normal general support allocations. This simply meant that we had to learn to live with less. Commanders were required to institute positive management and control of assets committed for their use. Allocations of aviation assets for assaults were closely monitored and planned operations that offered little assurance of success were cancelled or ground infiltrations were directed. Joint airmobile operations with GVN forces that were of little more than training value were discontinued. Ground insertion of reconnaissance elements was encouraged and often proved more fruitful. Increased emphasis was placed on keeping land LOC's open, and maximum use was made of them to establish forward staging areas for tactical and logistical operations.

c. Since initiation of this intensive management program, the brigade has realized an overall reduction of 23% in helicopter blade time. It is significant that this reduction was effected during a period of transition to a new mission with maneuver elements displacing into widespread AO's and the requirements for command liaison and close coordination increasing rapidly.

d. Units engaged in pacification require more normal aviation support due to widespread dispersion of troop resources throughout the AO and the requirement for close command liaison to these isolated positions. Limited land LOC's necessitated extensive use of aviation assets for periodic resupply of these elements. Of utmost importance is the necessity to maintain sufficient aviation assets in the area to form a ready reaction capability to respond to enemy activity directed against any of these small units or GVN elements. These conditions required an aviation allocation that provided such flexibility without seriously degrading normal mission performance.

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6. TRAINING.a. The brigade accomplished a two-fold training mission during 1970. The nature of our pacification role made it imperative that we upgrade the capability of local territorial forces by schooling them in all areas of basic military science. Concurrently, the maintenance of the brigade's combat efficiency dictated in-country schooling for our own personnel.

b. Our training of the territorial forces (RF/PF/PSDF) was accomplished in two ways. A formal leadership school was offered by the Brigade Schools. At unit level, small brigade elements collocated with territorial force units and conducted on-the-job training of local personnel.

c. The Leadership School was based upon the theory that the quality of the junior officers and noncommissioned officers of the territorial forces must be improved before the overall quality of the forces could be upgraded. The Brigade Schools in Cha Rang Valley conducted a 13-day course for RF/PF personnel. Instruction included basic military topics such as weapons care and marksmanship, leadership, map reading, compass use, communications, first aid, field sanitation, and squad and platoon tactics. Principles were also taught in subjects that pertain directly to the primary mission of the RF/PF - namely, patrolling and ambush operations along with techniques in hamlet defense.

d. The RF/PF OJT program was controlled at battalion level through the collocation of the indigenous forces with the brigade's Sky Soldiers. This training program was designed to upgrade tactical capabilities of RF companies and PF platoons, improve individual proficiency through OJT, integrate the skills developed during individual training into the operation of teams, upgrade the GVN chain of command at the district level, upgrade the logistical and administrative channels within territorial forces, and provide a foundation for the conduct of territorial security missions and village and hamlet security.

e. The RF OJT training included 192 hours of instruction over a 12-week period while the PF portion included 120 hours of instruction in a 12-week period. At least 25% of all training was conducted at night with emphasis placed on squad and platoon night ambushes, patrolling, counterguerilla operations, and village and hamlet defense, stressing fields of fire, aiming stakes, trip flares, and methods for requesting illumination and artillery fire.

f. The RF/PF program made each Sky Soldier an instructor and an advisor. When the program began, patrols were half Vietnamese and half US. At the end of the period, as the RF and PF manifested more confidence and experience, the patrols were almost entirely Vietnamese.

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g. For our own benefit, the brigade conducts two major internal training programs: Jungle School and 11B School. Jungle School is conducted at Cha Rang Valley for incoming company-grade officers and enlisted men with the rank of E-7 or below. In-country transfers to the brigade are not required to attend the Jungle School. The purpose of the four day course is to acquaint the student with brigade policies concerning tactical operations and to re-familiarize them with such basics as operation of the M16A1 Rifle, patrolling, map reading, hygiene, and preparing and issuing operation orders. Discussion is also held on the social, political, and military history of Vietnam, booby traps employed by the enemy, and the hazards of drug abuse.

h. The 11B School qualifies individuals for the secondary MOS of 11E. It is left to the discretion of the individual battalion commanders as to whether or not graduates may serve in this MOS upon satisfactory completion of the school. The course is 13 days in duration and is strictly voluntary. This course has provided the brigade a secondary source of infantry replacements and should be continued for the duration of the brigade's stay in Vietnam.

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7. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS. a. The brigade's psychological operations (psyops) concentrated primarily on the Vietnamese people and the furthering of pacification. Psyops against enemy units was a secondary mission. An oriental civilian population is a complex organism and any effective campaign requires area studies appropriate to psyops. Only one area study was available and that one concerned Phu My District — a relatively pacified area. The brigade worked closely with district officials to leap the information gap. However, these officials had scant knowledge of those villagers under VC control who were our main concern. Therefore, exploitation of incidents such as enemy crimes against innocent civilians, enemy defeats and setbacks, and use of Hoi Chanhs received greater emphasis than executing planned campaigns.

b. Following this formula, incidents were exploited by face-to-face confrontation. The first exploitations were combined with MEDCAPS. As the brigade psyops personnel gained experience and as they uncovered and worked with the most effective district officials, we were able to turn incidents into anti-VC rallies.

c. The same formula proved effective in furthering our voluntary informant program to encourage civilians to report information of VC activities. An unfortunate incident such as a death or injury of a family member or fellow villager from a VC booby trap has a far heavier impact on the average Vietnamese farmer than an appeal to patriotism.

d. These face-to-face confrontations also produced photographs and tape recordings which were used from both ground and aerial loudspeakers. Although the brigade used an average of three leaflet drops each day, the loudspeaker missions were far more effective. Interrogation of PW's and Hoi Chanhs disclosed that in those areas under their influence, the VC enforced arrest and jailing of anyone caught reading, carrying, or discussing leaflets.

e. In reviewing the brigade's psyops endeavors supporting pacification, it is clearly evident that the lack of psyops area studies hampered our effectiveness. Without these the local civilian population remained largely a mystery.

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8. ROADS AND BRIDGES AS SUPPORTS TO PACIFICATION. a. The brigade consistently worked to improve the road system in AO LEE as part of its overall effort to support the GVN pacification program. We recognized the need to open secondary roads from QL-1 to the remote areas east and west of QL-1 in order to insure GVN access and maximum commercial intercourse between remote villages and hamlets and the more populous commercial centers along QL-1.

b. The construction, damage, and repair of roads and bridges in AO LEE have taught us several valuable, albeit costly lessons. First, construction of roads to normal military standards caused an enemy reaction to their military potential as well as to their pacification value. Such construction was dictated to a large extent by the type of equipment used in building the roads, i.e., the D-7 bulldozer, 5-ton dump truck, and 290M scraper. If we had had smaller equipment or used a modified technique to build roads only wide enough for the tri-wheeled Lambretta, the major secondary road conveyance in rural Vietnam, the roads would have much less military value. This would virtually eliminate a major enemy reason to destroy them. Where an adequate heliborne transport capability exists, secondary roads need not be built to accommodate heavy military traffic. A possible construction technique could be to push up the soil on either side of rice paddy dikes with some type of civilian tractor, thus applying the basic road building principles used locally for centuries. Additionally, this would result in roads which the local people could understand and maintain.

c. Our second lesson is that inadequate emphasis has been applied to the organization and training of local district road maintenance personnel. Our road and bridge construction program has proceeded at a pace which has far outstripped the maintenance capabilities of local government agencies.

d. In future planning of pacification supportive road and bridge construction, major emphasis should be placed on the maintenance capabilities and commitment of the local GVN officials. A definite commitment that local officials will assume full responsibility for maintenance should be obtained. Concurrently, we should insure that proper steps are taken to organize, train, and equip the necessary maintenance and repair personnel. During planning, care should be taken to design these facilities to reasonable local standards. For example, secondary roads and bridges need be capable only of sustaining the minimum required civilian traffic such as Lambrettas and motor-bikes.

e. If existing roads and bridges are damaged or destroyed, we should seriously consider not making the repairs ourselves until we reevaluate the reasons for initial construction and ascertain the actual use of the facility. This will insure that our response is proper and will also permit us to see what the local people can do for themselves.

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9. LOGISTICS. a. The brigade had nine M551 Sheridan vehicles in E Troop, 17th Cavalry, with one float in the direct support maintenance company. The time period of 10 August to the present found us with the highest deadline rate since obtaining the vehicle. Basically, this was attributable to the loss of Sheridan-trained maintenance and operator personnel and the reduction of forces throughout Vietnam, which caused our repair parts resupply support to be switched to the distant Long Binh Depot. This exacerbated the problems normally found in supply support because of the communication problem between LZ English and Long Binh and the 250 mile distance between the two locations. The brigade was hampered by requisitions being lost, misplaced, or misrouted. Even after parts were located and shipped from Long Binh, they were sometimes lost in transit. This virtually always required the dispatch of one of our tech supply or maintenance personnel to obtain parts. A lack of some parts within the supply system caused vehicles to remain deadlined for extended periods of time.

b. The M113 Armored Personnel Carrier continues to be an outstanding vehicle. When properly maintained at the organizational level, it was invariably problem free.

c. For the most part, the brigade had few maintenance problems. However, the ones that were encountered were overcome by careful management of available resources and close and continuous liaison with support elements. This liaison became more and more important as the support moved further away from AO LEE. After the Qui Nhon Depot closed, our primary support came from Cam Ranh Bay. The most serious maintenance problems experienced by the brigade were the following:

(1) The 70 cubic foot, 3,000 BTU refrigerator units used by our mess halls were totally unsatisfactory simply because they proved to be too fragile for use by a mobile, forward combat unit.

(2) Some 10-kilowatt generators had as many as four engine replacements within a 90-day period. This was not due to a lack of organizational maintenance, but rather to poor quality control at the rebuild facility on Okinawa.

(3) The lack of available repair parts for the 1/4 ton and 3/4 ton vehicles caused the deadline rate to slowly rise.

(4) The PPS-5 ground surveillance radar system is a fine item of equipment, but it is too complicated for operation by the untrained infantryman. The deadline rate was higher than normal because of the lack of knowledge concerning the item along with the natural desire to "fix it" when minor operational difficulties arose.

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d. As the drawdown of troops and units progressed during the August - September period, a "free turn-in" of equipment was established. This was to allow for the turn-in of equipment for which the property book unit did not require accountability. On the surface, this program appeared to be the answer to "how do we get rid of the excess equipment?" However, the program was defective from the start, with the primary reason being the administrative nightmare required to turn in the items. Basically, a unit had to perform the following to achieve a turn-in:

(1) A job order, utilizing the DA Form 2407, was sent to the direct support unit for classification. If required, USARV Form 562 classification was executed.

(2) Once an item was classified as serviceable or unserviceable, it was returned to the unit. USARV Form 563, a statement of missing components, was required to be completed. Also, the log book was needed with all forms required under TAMMS, TM 38-750. Once all of this was accomplished, the unit then carried the item with all documents to either the serviceable or unserviceable turn-in point.

e. It is interesting to note that the only difference between the free turn-in of equipment and a turn-in where accountability is desired was the utilization of DA Form 2765-1, request for issue or turn-in. This program would have been a complete success had USARV established a true free turn-in system patterned after those in CONUS and Korea. In such a system, a unit is allowed to report to a supply company with any item and with no documentation. The item is then turned in and no questions are asked. As it turned out, USARV's documentation requirements did not make this a valid free turn-in program at the property book level.

f. The lack of organic water trailers and water trucks was a tremendous problem. This was overcome by the USARV temporary loan program which allowed units to hold an item of equipment pending MTO&E approval. For the most part, this was a successful system. In the future, however, policy should be established at Department of the Army level to allow commanders to notify the major headquarters logistical element that a specific number of trucks are required for water support. By this method, trucks could be obtained in a timely fashion without generating a tremendous administrative burden.

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10. RACE RELATIONS. a. Racial dissidence and subversive activity throughout Vietnam began to appear in early 1968 and grew to greater proportions in 1970.

b. A survey was conducted in this brigade aimed at detecting individuals and organizations whose activities could be construed as promoting disaffection, subversion, or racial tension. The survey was based on a synthesis of interviews, case files in the Counterintelligence Section, situation observations, and data obtained from a canvassing of personnel records on file in our support battalion at Phu Tai.

c. The survey indicated that there was no detectable organized subversive activity and that although racial polarization existed, there was no significant adverse effect on the brigade's mission performance.

d. However, in regard to the limited amount of racial tension, the Human Relations Council looked into this problem with a view toward alleviating it. It was alleged that the Negroes of the brigade felt that a disproportionate number of their race were being sent to the field and that they were not receiving jobs in rear areas. A survey was conducted and revealed no evidence of discrimination in job assignments. It was found that blacks were not discriminantly sent to the field but held down a representative proportion of rear echelon jobs as well.

e. Our brigade library was also a potential source of stress in race relations. It was noted that we had a very limited number of books by black authors or on Negro history. To cope with this potential problem area, my staff made every effort to secure books of this type, and as a result these books were made available.

f. One further step was to obtain pictures of "Afro" hair styles for the barbershops. It was felt that the lack of these pictures showed a lack of sensitivity. I also met with a group of young black soldiers who voiced their grievances, some of which were valid. These experiences revealed that productive utilization of spare time, good leadership at platoon and company level, commanders' open door policies, regularly scheduled Human Relations Council meetings, and esprit de corps were all positive factors which tended to reduce racial tension. When commanders take a positive, active interest in their troops and build group identity such as has been done in this brigade, racial problems are alleviated. Special volunteer units such as the 173d Airborne Brigade have a unique ability to foster esprit, teamwork and group identity. The value of this trait of "elite" units should not be ignored as the United States Army strives to become an all-volunteer force during a time when our society is torn by racial and social conflict and dissent.

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11. DRUG ABUSE. a. There has been a marked increase in drug abusers who turn themselves in under the drug amnesty program. This parallels the overall increase in the US Army in Vietnam. In the brigade two innovations have been initiated in an effort to help combat the loss of men and man hours due to drug abuse.

b. In the Mental Hygiene Clinic the capability of objective psychological testing has been added. The clinic now has the ability to administer the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. This is a sound and accurate objective psychological testing device to help in the evaluation and treatment of drug abusers.

c. A drug amnesty treatment program on LZ English has been established. This voluntary program (known as "Sky House") treats chronic drug abusers who are motivated to withdraw from their drug usage addiction on an in-patient basis. My main concern in implementing this program was to provide additional support to the drug abuser in his most critical period, that is, when he is sincerely motivated to discontinue his use of drugs. A person enters the program after being referred by his unit commander, battalion surgeon, or chaplain. He is screened for admittance at the Brigade Surgeon's office. Motivation, history of drug abuse, and prognosis for further positive military service are key factors in determining admittance into the program. While in the program the user receives medical aid, a physical place to reside, spiritual help, psychological testing, and evaluation and supportive counseling. There is no predetermined length of stay for an individual in the program. He is constantly evaluated as to his medical and psychological progress, which are key factors in determining his length of stay. After successful completion of the program, users are returned to their units.

d. Although still in its infancy, the program is a practical, positive approach to the drug abuse problem and is a significant effort to treat and cure the drug abuser rather than merely handling him administratively.

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12. JUNIOR OFFICER RETENTION. a. I became very concerned, in view of current changes in the Army and the plans for an all volunteer Army, with the problem of retaining our junior officers. According to the 19 October 1970 letter from USARV, subject: Junior Officer Retention Statistics, the 173d Airborne Brigade had the highest retention rate in USARV. I feel that being an airborne unit played an important part in our success. Pride in unit and in oneself were motivating factors which reflected in our retention statistics.

b. In the brigade's retention effort, the Junior Officers' Council played an important role. It was a direct communication link between myself, my staff, and the junior officers. This council effectively gave the junior officer a voice that could be heard. In order to continue retaining our junior officers, we must compete with private industry and its attendant higher pay, personal security, and stability.

c. Junior officers must have, as I stated before, pride in themselves and the Army. I believe that the 173d Airborne Brigade fosters an extra measure of pride, which leads to increased personal satisfaction; consequently, the service appears more attractive as a career.

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13. SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION. a. In this separate airborne brigade there is an unmistakable requirement for a Special Troops Battalion as a means of providing administrative, logistical, and military justice support for the five separate companies (Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 534th Signal Company, 173d Engineer Company, Company N (Ranger), 75th Infantry, and E Troop, 17th Cavalry) and several smaller units attached to the brigade. The headquarters consists of a battalion commander (authorized grade of O5, but normally filled by a senior O4), an S-1 and an S-4 (both in the grade of O3), two warrant officers, and a sergeant major.

b. I tasked the battalion commander with two additional functions - headquarters commandant and installation coordinator. The commandant's function speaks for itself, but the position of installation coordinator can best be equated to that of a post commander with associated responsibilities.

c. This ad-hoc arrangement worked satisfactorily in all areas. The Special Troops Battalion Commander rates his staff and the commander of the Brigade Headquarters Company. However, the commanders of the other separate companies are still rated by the staff officer who exercises staff supervision.

d. My experience with the Special Troops Battalion headquarters convinced me of the validity of the concept. I recommend that the TOE of all separate infantry brigades be modified to include a battalion headquarters of this type. This will provide an efficient solution to the many problems faced by the commanders of separate companies.

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14. THE BRIGADE ACTING INSPECTOR GENERAL. a. Separate Infantry brigades are not authorized a detailed inspector general. However, based upon the absolute necessity for the performance of those duties normally handled by a detailed inspector general at division and higher, the brigade has maintained a full-time acting inspector general (AIG), assistant AIG, and a supporting staff of four enlisted men.

b. I utilized my AIG as a personal staff officer who reported to me through the Brigade Executive Officer. He was assigned the primary mission of inquiring into and reporting on matters pertinent to the performance of the mission, state of discipline, efficiency, and economy of the brigade.

c. This was accomplished primarily through inspections, investigations, and surveys. The AIG also alerted me to current trends and potential problem areas within my command. A major part of his time was devoted to the investigation of complaints and requests for assistance from members of the brigade, local nationals, and, occasionally, individuals and agencies outside the brigade. It was also the AIG's responsibility to monitor the brigade's inspection program and coordinate preparations for the USARV Annual General Inspection. In all these tasks the AIG maintained close coordination with appropriate primary and special staff agencies. In summary, the AIG performed all the duties of a detailed division IG. Of course, some of the normal IG functions were magnified by our combat environment and remote location.

d. In October 1970, the AIG assumed the additional mission of conducting regular audits and inspections of brigade nonappropriated fund activities, with particular emphasis on officer, noncommissioned officer, and enlisted open messes. This became the direct responsibility of the assistant AIG, who was assisted by an enlisted auditor.

e. Since a separate Infantry brigade encounters the same problems as a division or higher headquarters, I recommend that the TOE of separate brigades be modified to include a detailed inspector general, grade 04, and staff. As a minimum, this staff should include one officer assistant*, one chief clerk, one auditor*, and two clerk-typists. It has been my experience that this minimal staff is essential to the efficient accomplishment of the AIG's duties.

* These two positions are necessary only if the AIG is tasked with the audit/inspection of clubs and other nonappropriated funds.

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15. **CONCLUSION.** a. My departure from the 173d Airborne Brigade coincides with the termination of the brigade's total commitment to pacification. The brigade severs its "umbilical cord" to the territorial forces with the knowledge that the situation in all areas is better than when we began. We have successfully created a viable base in northern Binh Dinh Province upon which the GVN can continue to build.

b. The continued success of the RF/PF is contingent upon their possession of adequate communications, weaponry, and leadership. Authorized modern equipment is not always available. When it is, it is not always properly requisitioned and maintained. The need for good leadership at the territorial force level will not be satisfied if the reputation of northern Binh Dinh makes it a perennial "dumping ground" for inept and incompetent GVN officials. Because of its long history of VC domination, Tam Quan is the most precarious district in AO Lee. As a result, it has long been a terminus for incompetent GVN civilian and military officials.

c. This report is pervaded with optimism because great progress has been made and the potential for further progress exists. But realism dictates that this optimism be tempered with the admission that not all who appear to support us and the GVN are allied with us. Our friendly relations with the villagers are often a reflection of their desire to avoid a confrontation with us rather than evidence of a pro-GVN allegiance or a high degree of pacification.

d. There is also a trace of evidence of an unofficial accommodation between some territorial forces, particularly PSDF, and local Viet Cong. At best, this indicates a lack of true commitment. At worst, it means Viet Cong infiltration of GVN para-military forces. Regardless of the reason for it, peaceful coexistence with the enemy can only have one outcome: ineffectiveness of territorial forces and paralysis of the GVN Pacification Program.

e. The 173d Airborne Brigade has acquitted itself extremely well in a role it was not originally trained or equipped to play. The operational concepts and organizational modifications discussed in this paper are our efforts to adapt ourselves to the pacification role. Much blood and treasure have been expended to make the progress we boast of. The residual American presence in AO LEE now becomes the scattered USMACV advisory and combat assistance teams. The GVN and its armed forces must continue to progress in order to fill the gaps left by the brigade's withdrawal from its pacification mission. If not, our accomplishments will be jeopardized, and our sacrifices will have been in vain.

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UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		39. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
HQ, DA, OACSFOR, Washington, D. C. 20310		CONFIDENTIAL	
2. REPORT TITLE		38. GROUP	
Senior Officer Debriefing Report: BG E. R. Ochs		4	
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Senior Officer Debriefing Report, 10 August 1970 to 15 January 1971.			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
BG E. R. Ochs			
6. REPORT DATE	7A. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7B. NO. OF REFS	
15 January 1971	32		
8B. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9B. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
A. PROJECT NO.		71B018	
C. N/A		9B. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
D.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		DA, OACSFOR, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

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DD FORM 1473
NOV 66UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification